

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 04/04/2025

Time: 03:00 PM

Location: CR 229 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: GM 0774 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, gubernatorial nominee, WESLEY LO, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

Purpose of Bill:

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the nomination of Wesley Lo for the Hawaii State Board of Education.

Mr. Lo possesses a wealth of experience and a proven track record in strategic leadership, financial management, and community engagement that would be invaluable to the Board and the Department.

Mr. Lo's extensive background demonstrates his capacity to effectively develop and execute strategic vision and increase organizational performance across diverse sectors, including non-profit, for-profit, and governmental entities. This broad perspective will be crucial in addressing the complex challenges and opportunities facing public education in Hawaii.

His direct experience within the educational landscape is particularly noteworthy. Mr. Lo developed and launched innovative workforce development pathways, specifically the CNA to LPN "earn and learn" Bridge Program, with the University of Hawai'i and the Department of Education. This initiative highlights his understanding of the importance of building a strong workforce and his ability to collaborate with educational institutions. Furthermore, Mr. Lo has prior experience serving on the State of Hawai'i Board of Education, where he held the position of Director and served as Chair of the Human Resource Committee and Member of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee. He was also an inaugural member of the first appointed Board of Education, serving as Chair of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee. This direct governance experience

within the state's education system provides him with a deep understanding of its operations and strategic needs.

Given Mr. Lo's strong background, I strongly recommend the committee confirm his nomination for the Hawaii State Board of Education.

GM-774

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:38:10 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/4/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grant Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Kidani and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I would like to express my wholehearted support for the reappointment of Mr. Wesley Lo to the Board of Education. Mr. Lo has served on the Board of Education for a number of years, both recently, as well as during another term of service several years ago. He has become extremely knowledgeable and familiar with the inner workings, challenges, and opportunities that the Board is called upon to grapple with each year, and he has always approached decision-making with an eye towards what will be most beneficial to the students and their families.

Mr. Lo is a very busy healthcare executive, who could easily and credibly have refused to serve on the Board of Education given his other commitments and obligations. However, he is a true believer in the cause of education and the excellence that is fostered in that arena when supportive policies and decision making occurs. We are fortunate that he is willing to give of himself in this manner.

Thank you very much for your kind and favorable consideration of Mr. Lo.

Sincerely yours,

Grant Y. M. Chun

From: Roy Sakamoto
roy@sakamotoproperties.com

Re: Wes Lo Nomination to Board of Education

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Wes Lo for many years both as CEO of Maui Memorial Hospital and as current CEO of Hale Makua Health Services on Maui. He has always demonstrated strong leadership abilities with the concern of the general public at the forefront of his efforts.

I have been a member of the Hale Makua Health Services Board of Directors for many years and we have done extremely well during Wes's tenure with his expert guidance and forethought.

I strongly recommend Wes's nomination to the Board of Education be approved. He will be a tremendous asset to the board.

Mahalo,



ROY SAKAMOTO
roy@sakamotoproperties.com

(808)870-7060

April 1, 2025

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: GM 774
Testimony in Support of Mr. Wesley Lo
Confirmation to the Board of Education

Dear President Kouchi and Members of the Senate

It is without hesitation that I support the nomination of Wesley Lo for confirmation on the Board of Education.

As reflected by his resume, Mr. Lo has dedicated his career to ensuring that there is sustainable health care throughout Maui and the State of Hawaii. He has led large healthcare institutions through transformative change with strategic visioning, restructuring, and financial recovery. As someone who knows Mr. Lo as a colleague, it is apparent that he has an invaluable and rare combination of leadership, vision, and competence.

The Board of Education needs people who have the ability to think and plan strategically. With the current environment at the federal level and the need for improvements in our state department of education, we need someone that has implemented institutional change effectively and financially. Mr. Lo is able to put words and plans into action and delivers on his commitments.

In addition, Mr. Lo is always willing to contribute to our island community. Extraordinary action and leadership are needed to lead our keiki through the 21st century. Their solid education provides the foundation for our communities as our future workforce and community caretakers. Mr. Lo will be an excellent addition to the Board of Education, bringing his commitment to excellence, dedication, and hard work to continue to move Hawai'i forward and bring Hawai'i's communities together.

I respectfully request your support for the confirmation of Mr. Wesley Lo to the Board of Education,

Sincerely,



Kathleen Chu, PE
Vice President



GM-774

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:43:38 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/4/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lance Wilhelm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write today in strong support of the appointment of Wes Lo to the Board of Education. Mr. Lo's track record of community service is outstanding. He is also very committed to making the DOE the best it can be by being a fully engaged and active board member. The BOE and the State of Hawaii is lucky to have him on the board.

Friday, April 4, 2025 at 3:00 pm
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Senate Committee on Education

To: Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

Re: GM 774 – Testimony In Support

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, WESLEY LO, for a term to expire 06-30-3028.

My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs for Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

I write in **support** of the nomination of Wesley Lo to serve on the Board of Education.

Through the positions he has held, Mr. Lo has demonstrated that he is a hardworking, thoughtful executive who is able to successfully marshal private for-profit and nonprofit stakeholders as well as public sector entities to formulate initiatives for the benefit of the community. In his current position as Chief Executive Officer of Ohana Pacific Health and Hale Makua Health Services, Mr. Lo is at the forefront of modernizing operations and improving transitions in healthcare navigation with Ohana Pacific Health (a for-profit entity) and Hale Makua Health Services (a nonprofit entity). The combined entity is the largest provider of post-acute care services in Hawai'i with operations on all four major islands.

As the former Regional Executive Officer of the Maui Region of the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC), recognizing the need to make healthcare more accessible to neighbor island communities, Mr. Lo led the most significant privatization effort in the history of the State. With the passage of Act 103 (SLH 2015), Maui's Public Hospitals entered into an agreement with private hospitals to ensure sustainability and delivery of healthcare services on the island of Maui.

Additionally, Mr. Lo is dedicated to workforce initiatives. He has developed and launched innovative workforce development pathways through the CNA to LPN "earn and learn"

Bridge Program in coordination with the University of Hawai'i and the Department of Education.

Having previously served as the Director of the Hawai'i Board of Education from 2011-2013 and as a member from 2024-2025, Mr. Lo is well versed in the processes and procedures governing Board activities. He has held leadership positions on a number of important boards, and through this role, has played a part in improving conditions in the State as well as for neighbor island communities.

I strongly support Mr. Lo's nomination and urge your committee to confirm his nomination to the Board of Education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



April 2, 2025

The Honorable Michelle N Kidani, Chair
And Committee Members
Senate Committee on Education

Subject: GM 774 Relating to consideration and confirmation of Mr. Wesley Lo to the Board of Education

Dear Chair Kidani and Members:

I am writing to offer my strong support for the confirmation of Mr. Wesley Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education.

I have had the privilege of working with Mr. Lo over the past 25 years in both the private and public sectors. His leadership in transformative initiatives, such as the successful privatization of Maui Memorial Hospital system, demonstrates his ability to navigate complex challenges – an invaluable skill that will greatly benefit the Board of Education as it works with the Department of Education to advance its 2023-2029 Strategic Plan.

Over the past year as Chair of the Human Resources Committee for the Board of Education, Mr. Lo has shown a strong commitment to improving our education system by implementing accountability measures and performance metrics for the Department of Education. As these initiatives take root, it is essential that his leadership remains in place to see them through.

With the pressing challenges facing the Department of Education, including pending federal funding cuts, staff shortages, and a significant repair and maintenance backlog, Mr. Lo's continued leadership is vital to holding the Department accountable and driving meaningful progress for our students, educators, and the broader community.

I respectfully urge your support for Mr. Wesley Lo's confirmation to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. His proven leadership, dedication to accountability, and commitment to improving our education system make him an invaluable asset to the Board.

Respectfully,

Dexter Kubota, P.E.
Chairperson



GM-774

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:02:44 PM

Testimony for EDU on 4/4/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen Sadako Wachi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

GM774, Board of Education Gubernatorial Nominee

Wesley Lo

It gives me great pleasure to write in support of nominee Wesley Lo's confirmation to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. My name is Eileen Wachi and I have worked with Mr. Lo for nearly nine years as a Hale Makua board member.

As an education board member representing the community, Mr. Lo has well demonstrated his ability through his past experiences working collaboratively with groups at all levels. As an example, Mr. Lo led the successful privatization of Maui Hospitals to meet Maui's changing community and can be attributed to his collaboration with various groups from government legislators to community working groups.

Mr. Lo is a well accomplished and respected leader at Ohana Pacific Health. As shown in his resume, his finance experience enabled the implementation of best practices that led to increased revenues and ensured continued viability of the company. His direct involvement in organizational development to secure the next generation of leaders and as a key player in developing strategic initiatives to meet the future needs of our kupuna and those needing rehabilitation to return to normal life activities are commendable.

Your favorable consideration to confirm Wesley Lo as member of the State of Hawaii Board of Education will benefit our communities as demonstrated by his previous experiences resulting as an asset to the board. Mahalo for your vote.



April 4, 2025 at 3:00 pm
Conference Room 229

Senate Committee on Education

To: Chair Michelle N. Kidani
Vice Chair Donna Mercado Kim

From: Hilton R. Raethel
President and CEO
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Support**
GM 774, Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Education, Gubernatorial Nominee, Wesley Lo

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide strong support for Mr. Wesley Lo's nomination to serve on the Hawaii Board of Education. Mr. Lo has been an active and deeply effective leader in the healthcare sector and has helped guide our efforts to improve workforce development in public high schools in Hawaii.

Mr. Lo is a visionary leader who consistently demonstrates a deep commitment to improving the lives of individuals in our community. His passion for education and healthcare has been evident throughout his career, and he has made significant strides in advancing innovative education programs aimed at bolstering the healthcare workforce in Hawaii. For example, Mr. Lo has been instrumental in spearheading initiatives to address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in our state. Through innovative approaches to education and workforce development, he has played a pivotal role in creating pathways for individuals to pursue careers in healthcare, ultimately strengthening our healthcare system and enhancing access to quality care for all residents.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Wesley embodies integrity, compassion, and a genuine desire to serve others. He possesses the unique ability to bring people together, foster collaboration, and drive meaningful change for the betterment of our community.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Lo will continue to bring the same level of dedication, expertise, and leadership to the Hawaii Board of Education if confirmed again. Thank you for your consideration of our strong support of Mr. Lo's nomination.

GM-774

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 11:06:24 AM

Testimony for EDU on 4/4/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karey Kapoi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Mercado Kim, and members of the committee:

It is my pleasure to offer this letter of recommendation in support of Wesley Lo's nomination to the Board of Education for a term expiring June 30, 2028.

Wes is a deeply respected leader whose decades of service across Hawai'i's healthcare, government, and nonprofit sectors have been marked by innovation, integrity, and a consistent commitment to improving the lives of Hawai'i's people. His executive experience - spanning roles as CEO of Ohana Pacific Health, Hale Makua Health Services, and the Maui Region of Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation demonstrates his capacity to lead large, complex organizations through transformational change.

Equally important is Wes's strategic vision and financial expertise. He has successfully executed major strategic projects, navigating organizations through the EMR implementation, service line creations, the COVID-19 crisis, and played a central role in landmark legislation like Act 103, which enabled the privatization of Maui's public hospitals to ensure long-term sustainability of local healthcare.

Additionally, Wes is no stranger to education. In addition to leading workforce development initiatives in partnership with the University of Hawai'i and the Department of Education, he previously served on the Board of Education from 2011 to 2013, and currently serves again as Chair of the Human Resources Committee and a member of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee. His understanding of governance, budget oversight, and systems-level thinking is exactly what our education system needs in this time of transition, uncertainty and opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity offer my full support and highest recommendation for his confirmation. Please feel free to reach out directly for any additional questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Karey Kapoi

Honorable Members of the State of Hawaii Board of Education,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the nomination and confirmation of Wesley P. Lo to the State of Hawaii Board of Education. Mr. Lo's extensive experience and outstanding achievements in various sectors, particularly in healthcare administration, finance, and community service, make him an exemplary candidate for this critical role. Throughout his career, Mr. Lo has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, strategic vision, and a deep commitment to improving organizational performance and community well-being. As CEO of Ohana Pacific Health and Hale Makua Health Services, Mr. Lo's accomplishments are nothing short of remarkable.

Under Mr. Lo's leadership, Ohana Pacific Health and Hale Makua Health Services have flourished, becoming the largest providers of post-acute care services in the State of Hawaii. His strategic initiatives, such as the affiliation and acquisition strategies that doubled the size of operations, establishment of innovative healthcare navigation services, and development of workforce development pathways, exemplify his forward-thinking approach to addressing complex challenges in healthcare delivery.

Mr. Lo's financial acumen and stewardship are equally impressive. He led Hale Makua Health Services through a significant financial recovery, increasing its net assets from \$2.5 million to \$12.4 million within a three-year period. Moreover, amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Lo navigated both organizations through turbulent times, resulting in increased net assets for both companies.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Mr. Lo has been actively involved in numerous community organizations, including serving as Chairman of the Board for the Hawai'i Health Network and as a director for the Maui Economic Development Board and Maui High School Foundation, among others. His dedication to community service underscores his commitment to enhancing the well-being of Hawai'i residents beyond the confines of his professional responsibilities.

Furthermore, Mr. Lo's prior experience as a director on the State of Hawai'i Board of Education and other boards positions him well to understand the complexities of governance and the importance of education in shaping the future of our state. His tenure as Chair of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee demonstrates his ability to provide insightful oversight and strategic direction.

In conclusion, Wesley P. Lo's outstanding qualifications, demonstrated leadership, and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Hawai'i residents make him an ideal candidate for the State of Hawaii Board of Education. I urge you to support his nomination and confirmation, confident that he will serve with integrity, diligence, and excellence. Thank you for considering Mr. Lo's nomination, and please feel free to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Rich Kishaba

Founder Ohana Pacific Health

GM-774

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:38:10 PM

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Grant Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

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Grant Y. M. Chun